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LETTER DATED 4 DECEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 2 December 1999 addressed to you by Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning a fresh act of aggression carried out by Turkish armed forces in the territory of northern Iraq on 23 November 1999 that constitutes a flagrant violation of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and poses a grave threat to its national and regional security. The Minister calls upon the United Nations to meet its responsibilities as stipulated in the Charter in order to prevent the intimidation and aggression to which Iraq is being subjected, and he asks you to do your utmost to prevail upon the Turkish Government to abide by the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law and to withdraw its armed forces from Iraqi territory forthwith.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed HASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 2 December 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 17 November 1999 addressed to you (S/1999/1188, annex), I should like to draw your attention to the fact that on 23 November 1999 units of the Turkish armed forces consisting of two brigades supported by armoured cars and the forces maintained in the area following previous hostile operations carried out a fresh act of aggression against the territory of northern Iraq. The hostile military operation was conducted in two areas (Jabal Matin and Jabal Karih), under the pretext of pursuing armed Turkish Kurdish groups.

This aggression by Turkey is the latest in an ongoing series of hostile acts carried out by its forces against Iraq at a time when Iraq is being subjected to daily acts of hostility by both the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

The Government of Iraq condemns and deplores in the strongest terms this fresh act of military aggression and the violation by Turkish armed forces of Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity and airspace. It calls upon the Turkish Government to withdraw its invading forces from Iraqi territory forthwith and to desist from repeating acts of hostility which are in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and the principles governing good-neighbourliness. The Government of Iraq further categorically rejects the pretexts and flimsy excuses advanced by Turkey to justify this aggression. The alleged pursuit of groups resistant to Turkish authority does not authorize the violation by Turkey of Iraq's territorial integrity, airspace and national unity.

The series of hostile operations and flagrant violations perpetrated by Turkish armed forces against Iraq's territory and airspace confirms Iraq's repeated warnings about the consequences of Turkey's duplicitous policy vis-a-vis the anomalous situation in northern Iraq, and about its role in continuing to facilitate the realization of the hostile designs of the United States of America and the United Kingdom by allowing their aircraft to take off from its territory for the purpose of imposing the aerial exclusion zones in northern and southern Iraq and preventing the restoration of legitimate authority in those areas.

In forcefully condemning this fresh act of aggression by Turkey against Iraq, the Government of Iraq reserves the right to determine a time and a place for its response thereto and affirms its right to ensure that Turkey bears full international responsibility, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and precepts of international law, for the consequences of these repeated acts of aggression which violate Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and pose a grave threat to its national security and integrity.

I hope that the United Nations will meet its responsibilities as stipulated in the Charter in order to prevent any continuation of the intimidation and aggression to which Iraq is being subjected, and I ask you to do your utmost to prevail upon the Turkish Government to abide by the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law and to withdraw its armed forces from Iraqi territory forthwith.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs